Red Rears for Rose and Rouge:
Chapter 5: All Dressed Up With No Place to Go

Amy Rose was tumbling down towards the blue sphere known as planet Mobius, all the way from the broken remains of the moon, but she felt strangely chill about it. As she passed through the mesosphere, she caught on fire like a meteor, and thought about how strangely relaxing this was. How romantic. She was a shooting star now.

Then, far below, she saw the distant outline of Central City from above, growing closer and closer, and a familiar rabbit seated on the towering archways of Radical Highway's iconic red gate bridge. It was Mrs. Vanilla, but in giantess form. As Mrs. Vanilla clapped her lap, her voice boomed across the landscape. "Amy Rose, you've been a very bad hedgehog, and you're getting a very good spanking. Come lie across my lap at once."

Amy Rose gasped. "Oh no! I'm so sorry, Mrs. Vanilla! I'll do better!"

Then, Amy heard Rouge the Bat's voice appear, as if from nowhere, and turned to find the bodacious babe of a bat falling alongside her. "No! Not that! Anything but that!"

"Hey! What are you doing here, Rouge?"

Roug pouted. "Whadda mean, Amy? This is my dream, isn't it!?"

"Nuh uh! This is *my* dream!"

Beneath them, Vanilla's gigantic lap grew larger and larger, until it filled their vision. Amy and Rouge slapped down face-first on Vanilla's thighs, but bounced as if they had landed on a giant balloon. Then, Vanilla easily pinned them both down against her lap with a single finger. "Tut, tut! Bickering again? You know what that means… this spanking will have to be on your bare little booties."

As Vanilla lightly tapped their bottoms with the index finger of her other hand, Amy and Rouge's clothing instantly disappeared. Amy gasped as she felt Vanilla's dainty index finger slam against her bottom like a giant paddle, and clutched her hands together. "Please, Mrs. Vanilla! I know I deserve a spanking! But—please, oh please—not on the bare! Not in public! What if someone sees—"

Then, Amy heard familiar, echoing laughter, and turned to see the giant form of Sonic the Hedgehog sitting on the opposite side of the bridge. A whole group of beautiful, scantily-clad giantesses were surrounding him on all sides, some human, some anthropomorphic animals. One of the blond bombshells languishing on Sonic's

lap bore an uncanny resemblance to a young Madonna. Sonic pointed a giant finger at Amy, then threw back his head and laughed. “Ah, ha ha! Amy Rose? You still get spanked? On your bare butt even? Bwa-haw! What a loser! Hey, Tails, get a load of this!”

Tails the Fox came in for a landing, holding a chilli dog in each hand, knocking aside two or three of the hot babes clinging to Sonic. “Amy’s getting a spanking? Oh, sweet! Serves her right for making off with my Chaos Emerald locator. Did I miss anything, big bro?”

Sonic brushed the Madonna look-alike off his lap, sending her splashing into the river below. “Nope! Show’s just about to start. Give it to her good, Vanilla.”

A deep, baritone voice boomed from across the horizon. “Yes, that’s right! And be sure to give the bat a few extra swats for me!”

Amy and Rouge twisted, and spotted a gigantic red echidna wearing a gaucho hat, gliding through the air, before he landed next to Sonic and Tails, knocking aside the remainder of Sonic’s harem. Then, the echidna kicked up his feet, and pulled out a box of popcorn and a cluster of purple grapes.

Rouge’s eyes went wide. “The Knuckle-head? Oh, no no no! Why aren’t you on Angel Island?”

Just as he was about to bite into a juicy grape, Knuckles the Echidna crushed them into jelly in his mighty paw, then pointed a gloved first at Rouge, his eyes blazing with hot fire. “Why? I’ll tell you why, you sneak-thief! Because you stole my Master Emerald…again! Why can’t you just leave me in peace, while I guard my people’s sacred emerald? Why must you keep trying to press your lips against my face, while I’m trying to fight you like an honorable warrior of the ancient echidna tribe? It doesn’t make any sense!”

Vanilla flicked her index finger against Amy and Rouge’s bottoms, with enough force to produce two, thunderous claps. “Goodness gracious, and stealing too? I’m afraid a simple spanking simply won’t suffice.”

Vanilla leaned over, reached for the forest shore opposite the river, and pulled up an entire redwood sequoia tree by the roots. With a quick tug, Vanilla cleared all the branches of the ancient tree, and held it high. “So, as a warm up…I’ll be taking a switch to you.”

As the shadow of the tree hovered over them, Amy and Rouge screamed and squirmed, tears spilling from their eyes like waterfalls, before Vanilla whipped the tree down across their bottoms with enough force to create a sonic boom, sending a

tidal wave ripping through the river before it crashed against Central City with the strength of a tsunami.

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Amy Rose jolted up from her pillow, and bumped her head against the bottom of the upper bunk bed. “No! No more spanking!”

From the top bunk, Rouge the Bat groaned, then hung down from the bed to look at Amy upside down. “*Mais la!* You too? What a nightmare…I dreamt we were both going to get…oh, yeah, this part was real.”

They heard a soft murmur, and turned to see Cream lifting her head from her pillow, her face calm and composed. “Good morning! I hope you both had sweet dreams of sugar plums and fairies!”

Rouge glanced back at her behind, pouting. “Yeah, sugar plums. Nice and round and red.”

Cream flashed a buck toothed smile. “I dreamt we were all having a lovely picnic, me and mommy and Mr. Cheese and Mr. Chocola–and we met you on the way and invited you to join us–and we found this wonderful little spot under a waterfall, and it was splashing and flowing and…oh dear…oh, dearie me!”

Frowning, Cream lifted her blanket, and revealed a wet yellow spot staining her sheets. “I think I had an accident last night.”

Rouge squeaked, just like a real bat, “Eep! Holy fu–uh–fudgecicles!”

Amy stared in horror at the stained bedsheets. “Oh dear…don’t worry, Cream. I’m sure if we just clean it up and–”

Then, with a soft fluttering of wings, Rouge gently floated down from her bunk bed. “Don’t panic! Okay, here’s the plan: I’ll sneak the bed sheets out the window and burn them in the fire pit.”

Rouge snatched the stained bed sheets and tugged them with such force, she accidentally performed the classic tablecloth trick, leaving Cream sitting on her bed completely undisturbed, if slightly confused by the absence of her bedding. Rumpling the soiled bedsheets into a tight ball, Rouge gestured toward Amy. “Agent Rose, you distract Vanilla. Just use your feminine wiles to–”

Rouge glanced at Amy’s flat chest, faltered, then shoved the bundle into Amy’s arms. “On second thought, I’ll distract Vanilla, you burn the evidence.”

Amy’s voice cracked. “What!?”

With perfect calm, Cream raised her hand. “But, Miss Rouge, we aren’t supposed to play with matches. You don’t want Amy to get another spanking, do you?”

Rouge curled her lip, and unbuttoned the top button of her pajamas to reveal a glimpse of her cleavage. “Of course not. And you’re not getting another spanking neither. You just have to keep a cool head, and follow my lead.”

Then there came a sharp rap-tap-tapping from the bedroom door, and Vanilla the Rabbit let herself in. “Girls? This is your wake up call!”

Rouge squealed, dropped to her knees, and clung to Vanilla’s skirts. “No! Don’t spank them, Mrs. Vanilla! It was me! I made them do it!”

Cream shook her head. “Don’t be silly, Miss Rouge. You didn’t make me do it. Mother? I’m afraid I wet the bed last night. I’m so sorry.”

Vanilla sighed softly, then nodded. “Not to worry, Cream. It happens.”

Then Vanilla glanced down at Rouge and raised an eyebrow. “And did you wet the bed too, Rouge, dear?”

Rouge pressed her lips into a tight line. “Um…no, ma’am?”

Vanilla patted Rouge on the head. “Then there was certainly no need to blame yourself!”

Rouge blinked. “But…aren’t you going to spank us?”

Vanilla stroked the side of Rouge’s head. “Spank you? For what? None of you have done anything that warrants a spanking. Cream, go take a quick shower. Amy, would you be a dear and start a load of laundry with those bed sheets? Then get dressed. We have a lot of work ahead of us.”

Holding the stained sheets at arm’s length, Amy nodded furiously, and side-shuffled past them, before disappearing out the door. “Yes, ma’am! Right away!”

Cream used her ears like wings to flutter slowly after Amy, paused in mid-air to glance at Rouge, and giggled softly. “Tee hee! My, what a silly start to the morning this has been!”

Rouge found herself alone, kneeling at Vanilla's feet. "So…you really don't spank for bed-wetting?"

Vanilla lifted Rouge up onto her feet, and patted the back of her hand between hers. "Of course not, because it wasn't on purpose. Children should never be punished for making simple mistakes. And, Rouge…I'm terribly proud of you for being willing to take the blame for someone else. But for future reference…"

Vanilla reached around Rouge's waist and patted her twice across her pajama-clad posterior. Rouge winced as she felt a soft twinge from the remnants of last night's bedtime spanking.

Vanilla looked Rouge deep in the eyes. "…whenever you *think* something bad has happened in my house, honesty is always the best policy. Do I make myself clear?"

Rouge forced a shaky, sharp-toothed smile. "Yes, ma'am! Clear as diamond!"

Vanilla gave Rouge's bottom a final love-tap, with just enough force to let Rouge to feel it through the fabric. "Excellent. In that case, let's find you something more *appropriate* to slip into."

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Amy grumbled as she stuffed the soiled linens into the washing machine. "First day of community service, working my butt off…and Sonic will be here tonight! If I'm not careful, he'll get a front row seat while Mrs. Vanilla takes me over her knee and starts *spanking* my butt off! If Sonic knew I was a cry-baby brat who still needs spankings…he'll never look at me the same way ever again! I need him to think I'm classy, mature, more alluring, just like—"

Amy paused as she noticed three outfits hanging on the laundry rack. The first two were the torn remains of Amy's designer red dress and Rouge's standard latex uniform. There was a sticky note attached to it with a note written in Vanilla's tight cursive: "Need to sew." But the third outfit could only be a second set of Rouge the Bat's clothes, undamaged. It was identical to the first, with the exception that the latex was a lovely midnight purple instead of black. Mrs. Vanilla had attached a sticky note to it with only one word: "Ugh!"

Amy swallowed. If only she had some of Rouge the Bat's sultriness, could she really make Sonic the Hedgehog fall in love with her?

As the washing machine started to hum behind her, Amy entered into a trance, and before she knew it, she was standing in front of the laundry room mirror, dressed in Rouge the Bat's outfit, stroking her hips. Now that Amy was just shy of 18-years-old,

there could be no denying, she wasn't a little girl anymore. Amy had been worried Rouge's ample chest size would make the outfit too big for her, but the elastic material of the heart-shaped top fit snug, just like a sports bra.

Amy pressed the top into place, feeling how it fit snugly against her bosom. Is this what a guy like Sonic would want her to be? Amy felt half disgusted with herself, but she also had to admit that she could see the appeal.

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Rouge the Bat frowned as she trotted alongside Vanilla the Rabbit. Vanilla was wearing a pair of navy-blue overalls, which bore the brand-name Nintendont.

Rouge was dressed in one of Amy's older red dresses, and didn't look very happy about it. "But Mrs. Vanilla, I don't need to borrow a dress. What's wrong with my spare uniform?"

Vanilla clicked her tongue as she led Rouge by the hand. "Because your uniform is hardly appropriate for work attire."

"What do you mean? I wear it to work all the time. It's business casual."

"Perhaps it's considered acceptable for espionage work at G.U.N., but you're working for the community of Floral Forest village now, and *here* the business casual for ladies is a simple dress."

Rouge twisted to examine the seat of her mini skirt, and pouted as she tried to pull it down to cover her white bloomers (an unworn pair gifted to her by Vanilla). "But the skirt is too short! People will totally be able to see my panties!"

Vanilla paused, and examined Rouge's behind with a look of concern. "Hmm, good point. Everyone in the village has already seen you two stripped naked, spanked, and put in timeout. I'd hate for you girls to suffer any additional embarrassment. Maybe you should wear black gym shorts? Those wouldn't be quite as noticeable. I think Amy might have a clean pair you could borrow."

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Amy heard the laundry room door opening, and jolted, desperately trying to cover herself with both hands. The moment Amy turned, Vanilla strode into the laundry room, beaming with delight. "Amy, guess what? You and Rouge are going to be matching…twinsies?"

Rouge's eyes popped open as she noticed Amy's stolen outfit, then she crossed her arms, scowling. "Hey! What gives?"

Amy dropped to her knees, and clutched her hands together. "Please don't spank me, Mrs. Vanilla! Waaah!"

Vanilla stood to her full height. "Amy Rose, stop that whining at once."

Amy pressed her lips shut, and nodded, her eyes still watery. "Yes, ma'am!"

Vanilla sighed. "Now, let me hazard a guess. You spied Miss Rouge's uniform, and it piqued your curiosity. So you put it on, without asking for permission. Do I have the long and short of it?"

Amy hung her head. "Yes, ma'am. Guilty as charged."

Rouge snorted. "Hmph! Maybe a spanking would teach you not to touch my things without asking."

Amy's lip quivered.

Vanilla turned to look Rouge in the eye, and put a hand on her bare shoulder.. "Hmm, an intriguing suggestion, Miss Rouge. Though, to be fair…I did dress you in Amy's old dress, without asking her for permission. What do you think, do *we* deserve a spanking too?"

Rouge froze as she caught a glimpse of Vanilla's buck-toothed smile. Immediately, the thought of commanding Vanilla to lie across her knee occurred to Rouge, but she thought better of it. "Well…I suppose I can forgive Amy for being a little curious. If I wasn't me, I'd be jealous of my wardrobe too."

Then, Rouge smirked, and spun a pirouette, the short red skirt flying up along with the motion. "You know what, I think I'll keep this. I look hot in red. Then again, I look hot in anything."

Vanilla grimaced, and coughed. "Ahem! Thank you, Rouge. In that case, Amy, since Rouge is willing to forgive you, I see no need to administer a spanking. After all…I did tell you to get dressed. I never specified what you could–or shouldn't–wear."

Instantly, Amy's tears disappeared. "Really? I'm old enough I can wear this?"

Vanilla's smile broadened. "Of course you may. In fact…I think you should wear it the entire time we're cleaning up this morning."

Amy blinked once. Then she blinked twice. Then she blinked thrice. “What?”

At that moment, Cream the Rabbit literally flew into the room, spinning a circle around Vanilla and Rouge’s heads, before coming down for a landing in the middle of the laundry room. Cream was dressed in a green blouse and orange skirt, which Amy recognized as one of her old outfits. “Ta da! Look, Amy, I’m finally big enough to fit into your old dress. We’re all going to…”

Cream trailed off as she noticed Amy’s strange wardrobe. “…wear funny clothes today.”

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Buddy the Fox, Barry the Quokka, and Honey the Squirrel sniggered as they watched the grainy footage of Amy and Rouge’s spanking for the 100th time on Buddy’s flip phone.

Buddy’s laugh grew more nervous. “Okay, dudes, we’ve had our fun, but…I kinda need my phone back.”

Honey pushed his hand away, and doubled over with giggles, shaking her head. “No way! This is our shared bounty. I just gotta save this to my micro SD card, and we’re good to go.”

Barry gasped for air. “It’s just too bad we didn’t have a nice camera on us. Like my Dad’s old camcorder.”

Honey froze, then pulled her SD card out of Buddy’s phone. With a smirk, she popped it into her own phone with a smirk. “Go on.”

Barry’s laughter died, and he glanced behind his back. “What? You want me to…no, bad idea, Honey. It’s a memento from my Dad’s days in film school…he says they don’t make them anymore.”

Honey raised an eyebrow. “What kind of camera don’t they make anymore?”

Barry swallowed. “I dunno. You have to put these weird black case things in it. Dad calls em…VHS tapes?”

Honey harrumphed, and roughly handed Buddy back his flip phone. “Hmph! I’ve heard of those. Probably not as good as a modern camera, but still…much better than this. Well, what are you waiting for? Go get it, Barry!”

Barry bit his lip. “But…Dad said if I ever mess with his camera again, I’m gonna get knocked from here til Sunday!”

Honey tapped her foot. “I already got one spanking that you two should have been in on. You owe me one, remember? Barry, you’ll get the camera, and Buddy, you’ll be our camera man, just like for the first video.”

Buddy stiffened as he examined his phone. “Me? But, Honey, I don’t know if I can use that kind of camera.”

Honey shrugged, and flashed a toothy smile. “Nonsense. You got a steady shot of the first spanking, while Barry was giggling his head off. You’re a natural camera man!”

Buddy grit his teeth. “Well, maybe I don’t wanna do it! Maybe I don’t want to get in trouble!”

Nodding, Honey tapped her own phone. “Oh? You don’t want to get in trouble, huh? I completely sympathize! In that case…”

Honey flipped her phone, to reveal the end of the damning spanking video, which ended with a still frame of Buddy and Barry examining the camera with glee. “...you better do *exactly* as I say. That is, if you don’t wanna get caught!”

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Amy blushed furiously as she trotted along after the rest of the group. “But, Mrs. Vanilla, don’t you want me and Rouge to be twinsies today?”

Vanilla paused at the door, and patted Amy’s behind to usher her out the front door. “Nonsense! After all, you’re old enough to decide what you want to wear in public. Don’t you want to wear that…*daring* ensemble, Amy?”

Amy took a quick breath as she felt the pat across her behind, and skipped out the front door, covering her front. “Well sure, but—we’d be so cute together! I can just go change real quick. Really, it’s no trouble!”

Vanilla stroked her chin. “Hmm. I don’t know. I *did* tell you to get dressed and ready for work. And we don’t have time to dawdle all day, trying on different outfits…”

Ahead of them, Rouge and Cream paused and peeped over their shoulders to watch the proceedings. Rouge had a look of sly schadenfreude, while Cream had a look of sorrowful sympathy.

Vanilla crossed her arms. “...So tell me, Amy, are you *perhaps* having second thoughts on whether you’re old enough to dress like that in public?”

Amy hunched her shoulders, then tried to stick out her chest to look more confident. “Well…no, that’s not what I meant. I’m plenty old enough to pick the clothes I wanna wear!”

But as Amy glanced down nervously, she noticed the hot-pink heart-shaped top again, and wasn’t so sure.

Vanilla only stared, then took Amy by the elbow and led her along. “Then that settles it, I suppose. Come along, Miss Amelia Rose. Chop chop. I want everyone to see how mature you two have decided to be!”

Amy clenched her jaw, then forced herself to chuckle as she was led along.

Rouge the Bat skipped alongside them, holding a picnic basket. “Oh yes, Mrs. Vanilla! I can’t wait to help repay our debt to society. And what will be our first order of duty?”

As they approached the front door of a neighboring cottage, Vanilla smiled sweetly. “We’ll start with forest clean up. But I’ll have to borrow some equipment.”

Cream held up her own picnic basket. “Like folding chairs for our picnic?”

Cheese the Chao popped his head out of Cream’s picnic basket, and chirped. “Chao, chao-chao?”

“Ah, yes, those too. Thank you for reminding me, Cream and Cheese.”

Vanilla rapped at the door, and a middle-aged quokka answered. “Howdy, Mrs. Vanilla.”

Mr. Quokka glanced absent-mindedly at Amy and Rouge, then did two double-takes in a row as he examined each of their unusual outfits.

Vanilla cleared her throat. “Good morning, Mr. Quokka. Would you, perchance, still have that old chainsaw?”

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In the dim, dusty interior of Mr. Quokka’s storage garage, Buddy the Fox, Barry the Quokka, and Honey the Squirrel examined a collection of VHS tapes stacked in row after row on chipboard shelves. Honey’ tiny toy flashlight acted as their only source

of light. Barry riffled through a cardboard box, and produced a hefty camcorder. “Here it is! We’ll just put it back when we’re done. Dad will never know.”

Buddy clasped his hands together. “Hypothetically, what would happen to us if he *did* know?

Barry swallowed. “You don’t wanna know.”

Honey peered closely at the camcorder. “Hold on, this thing needs a blank tape to record anything. I read that in a spy novel once.”

Barry fumbled with the buttons. “Um…but it’s empty?”

Honey pointed her light at the wall of VHS tapes, and grabbed one. “Then just stuff one of these in there.”

Barry clutched his skull. “Are you bonkers? If we do that, it will erase the previous recording!”

Buddy traced a finger along the endless rows of tapes. “Maybe there’s a blank one?”

“I don’t think so. Dad keeps complaining about how he can’t find another supplier since he bought up the backstock from that bankrupt video rental store… Blockbuster, or something.”

Honey furiously examined the tapes. “So we’ll just pick one out he won’t care about. Let’s see here…high school graduation, wedding day...birth of my first child? Ah, here we go, 1992 TV commercials.”

“No! Not Dad’s priceless 1992 TV commercials! He says you can’t get those anymore!”

Honey groaned. “Then you pick one, genius!”

Trembling, Barry grabbed a single tape. “W-w-well…maybe–”

There was a terrible, rusty groan as the back door opened, letting a thin strip of light stab across the floor. The kids caught their breath, and froze.

With heavy steps, Mr. Quokka plodded into the garage, and reached for a light cord on the ceiling. The incandescent lights flickered to life, clearly revealing the kids right behind Mr. Quokka, before the bulb stuttered and died. “Aw, what a load of– whatever. It’s gotta be here somewhere…Ah, and here it is! My chainsaw! Oooh, I

can’t wait to see the looks on those trouble-making kids’ faces! This will teach those juvenile delinquents some respect!”

Then, Mr. Quokka pulled a cord on the chainsaw, and with a stuttering, clicking roar, the motor rumbled to life.

Barry, Buddy, and Honey all jumped into each other’s arms, screaming in unison as they knocked over a shelf of tapes. “Aaaaaaaaaaah!

Mr. Quoakka yelped in surprise. “Yaaargh! Who’s in here? I’ll–”

But as Mr. Quokka swung up the chainsaw, the metal blade caught the lightbulb, and it exploded with a crack of electricity, sending sparks flying. Mr. Quokka danced in place as he was electrocuted, revealing his cartoony skeleton for maximum Saturday-morning cartoony effect.

The kids ran around in a panic, knocking over shelf after shelf like dominos in their rush to the exit. Fortunately, the last bookshelf at the end of the domino path knocked into Mr. Quokka, knocking him free from the electric shock. As Mr. Quokka lay flat underneath the shelf and pile of tapes, his chainsaw slowly wound down. “…Ow.”

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Outside, Vanilla, Cream, Rouge, and Amy overheard the muffled sounds of screams and crashing. Then, Mr. Quokka appeared at the door, his singed fur smoking slightly. “Here you are, Mrs. Vanilla…Say, you didn’t see anyone suspicious come running out the door, did ya? Like, thieves, or hoodlums, or government agents, or something?”

Rouge tightened her mouth at the mention of “government agents.”

Vanilla shook her head. “No, sir. We didn’t see anyone come out the front door.”

Mr. Quokka shrugged. “Eh, probably just some evil robots. Snooping as usual. Anyway, here’s that chainsaw for ya, Mrs. Vanilla. Keep it for as long as you need it!”

Cream grinned from ear to ear. “Thank you, kind neighbor!”

Vanilla nodded as she carefully took the chainsaw. “Yes, your generosity is most appreciated, Mr. Quokka.”

Mr. Quokka rubbed his head. “Aw, shucks.”

As Vanilla left with her crew, Mr. Quokka took one more curious look at Amy and Rouge, scratching his head. “Funny, I thought that government agents were only allowed to wear skin-tight uniforms…or was it that *only* government agents were allowed to wear those skin-tight uniforms? Well, either way, they’re a weird bunch.”

Mr. Quokka turned to find Barry, Buddy, and Honey, all sitting primly in little chairs around a kids’ table. “Say, what are you kids up to?”

All three kids screamed at once.

“We’re not up to anything!” howled Barry.

“We’re having a tea party!” yelped Honey, who was sitting on the priceless camcorder.

“We’re all criminals now!” screeched Buddy.

For a full five seconds, Mr. Quokka stared at the kids. “…Oh? That’s neat. Well, have fun, kiddos.”

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The birds of Floral Forest were chirping merrily as Cream laid out her picnic blanket on a grassy knoll, humming to herself.

The felled trunk of a once-mighty oak tree lay strewn across the lovely walking path. Vanilla carefully set down the chainsaw, and planted a foot on the trunk. “All right, ladies, today will be learning proper safety protocols for arbor removal. Be sure to take careful notes.”

Amy tapped her pencil against her clipboard. “Um, aren’t we just supposed to hack it up with a chainsaw?”

“Don’t be absurd! Trees may be beautiful, but they’re also dangerous. Devious. Unpredictable.”

Rouge curled her mouth into a half-frown, half-smile. “Unpredictable? They’re trees. What are they gonna’ do? Jump on us?”

Vanilla grabbed a nasty looking branch with a sharp twist of her wrist, snapped it clean from its tree limb. “One more crack like that, Rouge, and you’ll be feeling a switch across your bare bottom. That give you a *small* taste of just how bad a tree

branch can hurt you… And Amy, remember to raise your hand if you have an important question. Capice?”

Amy and Rouge snapped to attention, and held their pencils at the ready. “Yes, ma’am!”

Vanilla slapped the stick against her own palm, like a drill instructor. “Very good! Then let us begin with the basic safety training. Ever seen a marshmallow stabbed on a stick? Well, if you don’t want to end up like a marshmallow, we all have to be careful around these branches. Felling a tree can result in having a tree fall on you, if you don’t know what you’re doing. Even removing a downed tree entails risk, because it could roll or shift while we’re pruning it. Yes, Cream, you have a question?”

Cream lowered her hand. “So that means that good boys and girls should never try this at home?”

“That’s absolutely right, Cream!”

Cheese the Chao popped out of Cream’s picnic basket, and waved one of his adorable paws at the camera. “Chao chao, chao! Chao chao-chao chao chao, chao-chao-chao!” [Translation: “Yeah, kids. If you try this at home, you’re an idiot!”]

Tentatively, Amy raised her hand, and waited for Vanilla to nod approval before speaking. “So, this is sort of like a 3D puzzle? We have to figure out where the branch will go, before we cut it?”

Rouge grinned, and started to flap her lips. “Yeah, and–”

Then Rouge froze, clamped her mouth shut, and shot up her hand.

Vanilla let the moment hang, then smiled. “Yes, Miss Rouge? You have a question?”

“Erm, we’ll also need to make sure everyone else is clear of the tree, before we make a cut, right?

Vanilla nodded. “Correct. Though I’ll be the only one handling the chainsaw, at least for the first few cuts. If you girls are good listeners today, I’ll teach you both how to use it. But if either of you disobey my instructions, to the letter, or if there’s *any* fighting today…what can you expect to get?”

Amy and Rouge both pumped their fists into the air, with enthusiastic energy, and cheered at once. “A bare-bottomed spanking!”

Vanilla whipped the branch across her own palm. “You girls are such fast learners!”

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Behind a nearby tree, Buddy, Barry, and Honey listened with intense interest. Honey held up the stolen camcorder. “All right, troops, this is it. Hand me the tape.”

Barry blinked. “What tape?”

“The tape you said you’d get, duh.”

“You mean before my Dad went all chainsaw massacre on us? I didn’t have time to find a tape!”

Buddy fumbled with his glasses, and pulled out a VHS tape labeled with a hand-written note. “Um, I grabbed this one by accident in the confusion. I was too scared to drop it.”

Barry peered over Buddy’s shoulder. “What? That could be anything! What if it's one my Dad’s irreplaceable treasures?”

Honey snatched the tape, and read the words aloud. “Sonic OVA OST, master recording, 1996? Eh, he’ll probably never miss it.”

As Honey stuffed the tape into the camcorder and pressed the record button, Barry ran his fingers through his fur. “But, but–”

“But, and, or, lights, camera, action!”

Through the viewfinder, Honey saw Vanilla, Amy, and Rouge putting on goggles and industrial earmuffs. With a squirrelish smile, Honey adjusted the focus, aiming right at Amy and Rouge’s rear ends, all perfectly framed in her camera shot.

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After carefully pruning the first few minor branches, working from the base of the tree and moving toward the top, Vanilla instructed the girls each in turn on the use of the chainsaw. “Very good, Miss Rouge. Once we’re finished limbing, we’ll move on to bucking the tree.”

Rouge snapped her head up. “We’re *whating* the tree?”

Amy held up her hand. “Um, pardon me, Mrs. Vanilla. But what is whatting?”

“*Bucking* the tree, Miss Rose. We’ll chop the trunk into manageable-sized chunks. Now, stand back, Miss Rouge. It’s Amy’s turn with the chainsaw.”

Rouge nodded politely, and carefully stepped back. “Yes, ma’am.”

Vanilla sighed with content. “You girls have done an excellent job listening so far. Keep this up, and we might actually get through the whole morning without anyone getting a…spanking?”

Narrowing her eyes, Vanilla caught a glimpse of a red camera light behind a tree… and a squirrel’s tail. “Girls, stay calm. But I do believe we’re being watched.”

Amy started to turn to look behind her, but caught herself. “Is it Eggman?”

Unfortunately, she didn’t catch herself in time before Rouge elbowed her sharply in the shoulder. “Hey! Act natural, airhead!”

Amy tensed, then clutched her shoulder. “I was acting natural! You act natural!”

Vanilla wagged a finger. “Stop that bickering, right this instant, both of you. I don’t think it’s Dr. Eggman. Probably not one of his robots either, unless he’s making them look like a few miscreants from the local peanut gallery.”

Cream daintily sipped at a pink plastic tea cup, carefully avoiding looking at the tree. “Oooh, I spy, with my little eye, a squirrel tail. Probably Honey. I do like her, but she can be a bit of a snoop.”

Vanilla sniffed. “Is that so? Ah, and there’s a fox tail, probably Buddy, and there’s… little Barry Quokka. I begin to see.”

Amy stamped her foot. “They’re playing Peeping Tom? Oooh! That makes me so mad! Let me handle this, Mrs. Vanilla. One good bonk with my Pico Hammer will teach them to never–”

Rouge pulled Amy’s Pico Hammer from behind her back. “You mean this heavy boy?”

“What? The Pico Hammer is not a boy, she’s a mighty tool of–wait–why do you have my Pico Hammer?”

“I dunno. I guess it came with the costume.”

“But that’s not fair! It’s my Pico Hammer! Give it back!”

“You have my iron boots, don’t you? Those are my weapons.”

“But only one with a pure heart can properly wield the Pico Hammer! …Hold on, how are you even able to lift it?”

With an effort, Rouge spun the hefty hammer in her hands, feeling its ponderable weight. “Girl’s gotta keep in shape if she wants to go toe-to-toe with Chuckles the Knuckles. This whack-a-mole toy of yours is a bit more brutish than what I’m used to, but I think I can handle it.”

“Butish? I wield it with the strength of my love! There’s nothing brutish about true love!”

Vanilla put her hands on her hips. “Girls, that’s quite enough. Do you need a spanking to convince you to stop bickering?”

Amy and Rouge both stood at attention. “No, ma’am!”

“Then perhaps we can settle this disagreement like polite young women. Now, I’m no fighter, but I don’t think extreme violence will be necessary to deal with a few errant youngsters. Any suggestions?”

Cream put away her plastic tea cup, and stroked her chin. “Hmm…we could always try one of the old, reliable, rascally rabbit tricks!”

…

Honey the Squirrel sniggered as she watched the proceedings from afar. “Eh, heh! They’re having some kind of argument. Mrs. Vanilla’s bound to start spanking them any second now. Okay, Buddy, you’re up!”

Misunderstanding the comment, Buddy the Fox looked to Barry with a sneaky grin, before he suddenly remembered he was the one who had so foolishly chosen “Buddy” to be his cool new nickname a month ago. “Me? Why me?”

Honey thrust the camcorder into Buddy the Fox’s trembling, white-gloved hands. “You’re our designated camera man, remember?”

“But I got the shakes!”

Honey clapped Buddy sharply across the back, “I believe in you. Go get ‘em, Rookie!”

Buddy’s eyes popped from the force of the encouraging slap, then he smiled weakly, “Oh? Um, thanks, I *do* like ‘Rookie’ better as my nickname, now that you mention–”

There was a dense, thunderous crash, and all three kids bounced as the ground shook beneath them. Buddy peeped from behind the tree, and caught a shot of Amy Rose somersaulting backwards to escape from Rouge the Bat, who swung the Pico Hammer with enough force to cause a small earthquake with each impact. Rouge the Bat elegantly spun a pirouette to deliver a horizontal spin attack, followed by a second trembling vertical blow, which left a crater in the ground where Amy had been standing only a moment before. “That’s it, Amy Rose! I’m turning you into a pancake!”

Amy delivered a stunning flying butterfly kick to deflect an incoming stroke, then followed up with a running jump side kick, her stiletto high heel aimed at Rouge’s face. Rouge ducked backwards to evade the kick, then spun the handle of the Pico Hammer to force Amy to retreat.

Amy landed acrobatically, then spun to point at her opponent. “I’ll get you, Rouge! You stole my hammer!”

Rouge planted the butt of the hammer into the ground before her. “So what? You stole my look!”

Amy answered with another series of taekwondo kicks. “Oh yeah? Well your fighting style is weak!”

Rouge blocked and swung wildly. “At least I have style!”

Amy vaulted out of the way, then rolled into a spiky ball for a follow up bounce attack. “Sure you do. You stole my outfit after all!”

Vanilla clapped her hands sharply. “Young ladies! That’s quite enough! Think of the example you’re setting for Cream and Cheese!”

Cream laughed maniacally. “Mwa, ha, ha! I’ve just decided that when I grow up, I want to be a bad guy, and fight everybody all the time! Just like my two favorite role models, Miss Amy and Miss Rouge! Let’s go fight people, Mister Cheese!”

Mr. Cheese popped out of Cream’s picnic basket, wearing a black top hat and handlebar mustache taped to his lip, chortling with wicked, Chaoish malevolence. “Chao, chao chao!”

Cream held up her hand. “Chao Supiningu Atakku!”

On command, Mr. Cheese went flying in a spinning ball of adorable doom, aimed right at Amy and Rouge.

Rouge unfurled her bat wings and tried to fly to safety. But then, the heavy head of Amy’s Pico Hammer stopped her mid flight. “Yikes!”

Mr. Cheese slammed forcefully into the handle of the hammer, knocking it out of Rouge’s hands, before returning to Cream’s hand like a falcon.

Amy gasped. “My precious Pico Hammer? Cream! Cheese! How could you? That does it! From now on, I am no longer your unofficial big sister. I am officially declaring myself your unofficial, big bad *evil* sister!”

Amy snatched up her hammer, and delivered a wild running downward smash attack, aimed at Cream and Chease. “Hanmā Kōgeki!”

Cream fluttered her long ears to fly gracefully out of the way, and seemed to glide along the grass before pivoting. “Sandā Shūto!”

Cream spun backwards, and launched Mr. Cheese with a kick that sent him shooting at Amy.

Amy squealed as she saw the incoming tackle. “No! I’m too young and pretty to die!”

Then, there was a soft rush of wind, and Rouge the Bat came gliding in to gracefully intercept Mr. Cheese. She landed lightly, and held up a struggling Mr. Cheese with a single hand. “Oh, please. You girls think you’re bad? I’m O.G. Team Dark. This is your weapon? Well, I think he’s simply adorable. You’re a whittle cutie pie! Yes you are! Coochie-coochie, coo!”

Mr. Cheese tried to protest, before erupting into giggles. “Chao chao? Chao, chao chao-chao—Chao?! Chaaao! Chao-chao-chao! Cha-cha-cha!” [Translation: “Cutie pie? I’m pure evil! I’m–Ah! Noooo! Don’t tickle my tummy! Ah, ha ha!”]

Cream squeaked. “No! You not planning to use…the tickle torture? Not on poor Mr. Cheese!”

Rouge cradled Mr. Cheese gently against her ample chest, and laughed behind her hand, almost as if she was referencing a cheesy anime villainess. “Fu fu fu! What a devious idea! I’m so glad I thought of it.

Amy clutched tight to her hammer. “You fiendish vampire bat! Unhand him!”

Rouge bounced Mr. Cheese lightly in hands. Already, he seemed to have forgotten he was a hostage. Then she started tickling his little footies. “Surrender now, or Mr. Cheese will get the full, ‘This Little Piggy Went to Market’ treatment!”

Amy lowered her hammer, and posed melodramatically, hiding her face in despair. “It’s…it’s so over! We’ve lost this battle, Cream! Rouge is just way too good at being bad!”

Cream clutched her hands together. “All right, Miss Rouge, you win! Just please–oh please–don’t hurt Mr. Cheese!”

Rouge paused the tickling, and curled her lips. “Hmm, in that case…I demand your unconditional and immediate surrender. Amy Rose, I’ll have that hammer, *and* my iron boots back, thank you. And I think a little *punishment* might be in order. Specifically, a spanking!”

Amy froze. “Um…a spanking? What, as in, *you* spanking *me*?”

Behind the tree, Barry, Buddy, and Honey all poked their heads out a bit further.

Cream held her hands behind her back, and kicked a pebble. “Uh oh…are you going to spank me too, Miss Rouge?”

Rouge shook her head, then caught a glimpse of Mrs. Vanilla. “Oh, not to worry, Little Miss Cream. You were foolish to challenge me, but you are also young. Your mother, on the other hand, might benefit from a good spanking.”

Rouge flashed her most alluring bedroom eyes at Mrs. Vanilla. “Well, what do you say, Vanilla? Will you accept my terms, to save your precious Mr. Cheese?”

Then, Rouge blinked, and in that brief instant, Mrs. Vanilla seemed to teleport immediately in front of Rouge’s face, her eyes shining with mad, maternal menace. Then, Vanilla lightly pinched Rouge by the ear, and gently retrieved Mr. Cheese from Rouge’s frozen hands. “Okay, that’s quite enough nonsense. Good girls aren’t supposed to fight each other. All three of you have just earned yourselves a right good spanking.”

Behind the tree, Barry, Buddy, and Honey all sucked down a breath. This was it!

Then, Vanilla strode over to pinch Amy by her ear. “And Amy, you’re old enough to know better. Since you and Rouge have already been warned about fighting, both of you are getting a switching, as an extra punishment…across your *bare* bottoms!”

Amy’s lip quivered. “B-b-bare? B-b-but–”

Vanilla interrupted. “But, of course!”

Rouge grit her teeth. “B-b-but, why does it have to be on our b-b-bare b-b-bottoms?”

Vanilla imitated Rouge’s stutter. “B-b-because, a proper switch can cut through fabric. Now, I expect you to fetch your own switch. No, not those twigs from the dead tree. You’ll need to cut a fresh, green branch…I think a weeping willow would be most suitable.”

Slowly, Barry, Buddy, and Honey all looked up. Sure enough, they were hiding behind a weeping willow tree.

Vanilla released her hold on Amy and Rouge’s ears, and produced a pocket knife from her overall pocket. “Yes, *that tree.* Both of you, march straight over there, and be sure to cut off a nice, thick switch. At least the width of your finger. And at least ten of those, so I have plenty of spares for each of you.”

Barry and Buddy glanced up, and saw hundreds of switches matching that description, plenty for all of them and to spare. Barry grabbed Buddy by the shoulders and whispered. “We’re dead!”

Buddy glanced back and forth from Barry to his camera. “We gotta run! We gotta hide…Honey?”

There seemed to be an invisible, cartoon dotted line marking the place where Honey the Squirrel had been standing only a moment before.

…

Breathing hard, Honey sprinted through the woodland, until she was forced to rest on a tree, clutching her sides. “Just—gotta—get—outta—this—forest—”

Then, Cream and Cheese dropped down from the sky, landing right beside the terrified squirrel girl. Honey screeched so loud, it sent a flock of birds flying high above the forest canopy, where the scream echoed across Floral Forest.

As Honey lay on the ground, Cream smiled sweetly. “Why hello, Honey. Are we playing hide and go seek? I certainly hope so. I always win that game!”

…

After Honey was escorted back to the site of the fallen oak tree, the three spying youngsters stood in a line in front of Mrs. Vanilla, the camcorder resting on a tree stump between them. Amy and Rouge both clutched a bundle of switches, with smug looks on their faces. Now that they were no longer the ones in trouble, the prospect of a spanking was much less stressful.

Vanilla tapped her foot. “Well, well, fancy meeting you here. Are you all just enjoying a lovely stroll today?”

“Yes!” yelped Barry.

“No!” wailed Buddy.

“Filming!” gasped Honey.

Vanilla opened her eyes, with a half-lidded glance. “Filming? Why, yes, I suppose that does explain the camcorder…And what kind of footage were you hoping to get?”

“Birds!” squealed Barry.

“Criminals!” cried Buddy.

“Documentary!” howled Honey.

Cream cocked her head to the side. “Fascinating. A bird-criminal documentary, you say? How creative! I’ve never heard of a movie like that.”

Honey gestured to the camcorder. “It’s a documentary on the crime of littering and its impact on the bird population! For school!”

Vanilla whistled softly. “Phew! That sounds like quite a project. Did Mister Stewart assign that as your social studies homework?”

Honey bit her lip, cursing herself for her slip of the tongue. “Um…it’s more like an extra-curricular project, for extra credit…because we care?”

Vanilla nodded. “How ambitious. I suppose you were planning to interview some of the adults around town, to get their perspective?”

Honey nodded furiously. “Yeah!”

Barry gave a meager thumbs up. “Definitely!”

Buddy buried his face in his hands, sobbing. “Noooooooooo!”

Vanilla patted Buddy on the head. “Hmm…well, if I were you, I’d start by talking to your parents. I’m sure they’d love to hear about *everything* you’ve been up to. And if you’re ever curious to find out exactly what happens to criminals in Floral Forest Village…”

Crouching low, Vanilla looked them each in the eye. “…Just ask your parents to bring you over to my place for a visit. I’ll be happy to straighten you out!”

With that, Vanilla stood to her full height. “Now, be off with you. Run along.”

Honey bolted. Buddy and Barry ran into each other, before following her. Barry paused, then doubled back to retrieve the camcorder.

As Amy watched the kids go, she noticed the bundle of switches in her hand, and her smile vanished. “Um…you’re not *really* going to spank us again, are you, Mrs. Vanilla?”

Vanilla giggled. “Of course not, Amy, darling. We were only playing pretend, after all!”

Then, with a swish and a thwick, Vanilla snapped a green willow branch across her palm. “…But let’s be sure to bring home these switches. Who knows? They might come in handy.”

[End of Chapter 5]

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